

ROBERT F. HARNEY PROGRAM IN ETHNIC, IMMIGRATION AND PLURALISM STUDIES  
MUNK SCHOOL OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS  
2015 - 2016 HARNEY LECTURE SERIES IN ETHNICITY



# Yasuko Takezawa

## Beyond the Transatlantic Paradigm of Racialization: (In)visibility in Asia and Its Parallels in Europe

Thursday October 8, 2015 2~4 p.m.

Munk School of Global Affairs Trinity Site Room 208N  
1 Devonshire Place  
University of Toronto

**Abstract:** The existing literature of race studies is based mostly on the transatlantic experiences such as slavery and colonization of native Americans, without actively taking into account the experiences of the groups racialized through the discourses on "blood," as in Japan and other parts of Asia. Such racialized groups, sometimes called "invisible races," have no visible physical differences and have historically co-existed in the same region. They are not unique to Asia but exist in other parts of the world including in Europe and North America. When we examine the Middle Ages, I argue, significant parallels can be found in the discourses surrounding the Kawaramono (Burakumin) in Japan, the "Gypsies" in Romania, and the Jews in Spain. The primary purpose of the presentation is not to make comparisons between these groups per se. It aims to take a first step toward identifying how, and under what conditions, parallel social structures and discourses emerged surrounding groups racialized in this way, each within its own region

**Yasuko Takezawa** is professor of anthropology at the Institute for Research in Humanities of Kyoto University, Japan, and currently a visiting scholar at Harvard University. She leads an international collaborative research project, "A Japan-based Global Study of Racial Representations," funded by the Japanese government. Her English-language publications include: *Breaking the Silence: Redress and Japanese American Ethnicity* (Cornell University Press); *Racial Representations in Asia* (Takezawa ed., Kyoto University Press/ Transpacific Press); *Japanese Studies*, 35:1, Special Issue: *Rethinking Race/Racial Experiences* (co-ed with K. Iwabuchi); *Transpacific Japanese American Studies: Dialogues on Race and Racializations* (co-ed. with G. Okihiro, in press).

This event is open to the public.

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Registration: <http://munkschool.utoronto.ca/ethnicstudies/harney-lectures/>